

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 19, 2005. Claims 17 and 18 are in the application, with Claims 1 to 16 having been canceled herein, and new Claims 17 and 18 having been added. Claim 17 is the only independent claim herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,862,223 (Walker). Without conceding the correctness of the rejections, the rejections are nonetheless believed to be obviated by the cancellation of the rejected claims. However, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections, and submit that newly-added Claims 17 and 18 are allowable over the art of record for at least the following reasons.

The present invention generally concerns a help server which communicates with a user terminal and helper terminals. Question information and information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal, which are received by the server, are transferred to helper terminals. The server, upon receiving the question information, extracts information relating to the helper terminals in order to determine which helper terminals to transfer the information to. The helper terminals then provide a response to the server, whereby the server selects at least one helper terminal on the basis of the response received. The server then notifies the user terminal of the selected helper terminals, whereby the user can select a helper terminal to engage.

Referring specifically to claim language, newly-added independent Claim 17 is directed to a help server, which is capable of communicating with a user terminal and a helper terminal for providing information to the user terminal, comprising storing means for storing information relating to a plurality of helper terminals, first receiving means for receiving question information from the user terminal, extracting means for extracting

information relating to at least one helper terminal from the storing means on the basis of the question information received by the first receiving means, second receiving means for receiving, from the user terminal, information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal, transferring means for transferring the question information and the information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal, to each of the helper terminals extracted by the extracting means on the basis of the information of the at least one helper terminal, third receiving means for receiving, from each of the helper terminals, a response to the question information and the communication ability information, transferred by the transferring means to each helper terminal, selecting means for selecting at least one helper terminal on the basis of the response received by the third receiving means, and notifying means for notifying the user terminal of the at least one helper terminal selected by the selecting means, wherein the user terminal communicates with at least one of the helper terminals of which the user terminal has been notified by the notifying means.

The art of record is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of a help server a help server, which is capable of communicating with a user terminal and a helper terminal for providing information to the user terminal, receiving question information and information relating to a communication ability of the user terminal, transferring the question information and the information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal to helper terminals extracted from the question information, selecting means at least one helper terminal on the basis of a response received from the helper terminals, and notifying the user terminal of the selected helper terminals.

As understood by Applicant, Walker discloses an expert matching method and apparatus for managing communications between an expert having particular qualifications and an end user seeking a solution to an expert request. A controller receives an expert request and a search program identifies experts qualified to respond to the expert

request. The expert request is transmitted to the expert, which results in an expert answer being transmitted to the controller and forwarded to the end user. However, Walker is not seen to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of the present invention..

In particular, the portions of Walker cited by the Office Action as allegedly disclosing notice means disclose notification between the *expert* and the “Exchange”. The expert notifies the Exchange when he is available to answer a question, and notifies the Exchange of interest in an open job request. See Walker, Column 8, lines 29 to 34. Alternatively, the Exchange notifies an expert than there is an open job request. See Walker, Column 8, lines 36 to 39 and Column 21, lines 12 to 26. Moreover, Walker simply gives a user request to the first expert to respond, rather than notifying the user of the experts selected at all. See Walker, Figure 8 and Column 21, lines 34 to 36.

In contrast, the present invention features notifying the *user terminal* of the helper terminal selected by the selecting means.

Further, Walker is not understood to disclose transferring the question information and the information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal. Specifically, the portions of the Office Action cited by the Office Action as allegedly disclosing a server receiving at least one of a communication ability of the user terminal actually disclose criteria that the user can input to select an expert, rather than anything having to do with the user terminal, much less its communication ability. See Walker, Column 17, lines 13 to 21. For example, the user can request an expert having a certain price, qualifications, expertise in a subject area, or response time. See Walker, Column 17, lines 17 to 29.

In contrast, the present invention features transferring the question information and the information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal to helper terminals extracted based on the received question.

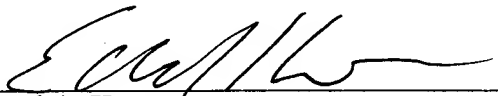
In view of the foregoing remarks, Walker is not seen to suggest or disclose at least the features of a help server a help server, which is capable of communicating with a user terminal and a helper terminal for providing information to the user terminal, receiving question information and information relating to a communication ability of the user terminal, transferring the question information and the information relating to the communication ability of the user terminal to helper terminals extracted from the question information, selecting means at least one helper terminal on the basis of a response received from the helper terminals, and notifying the user terminal of the selected helper terminals.

Accordingly, newly-added claims 17 and 18 are believed to be allowable over Walker.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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